

A STATE NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY.

At the Cincinnati meeting of the State Academy of Science the President in his annual address urged the effort to secure state support for a natural history survey. The Academy adopted a resolution endorsing the project and providing for a committee of three, to consist of the retiring President, the incoming President and the Secretary, to draft a bill and endeavor to secure its passage during the coming session of the General Assembly.

As a result of the efforts of this Committee a bill has been introduced by Hon. C. V. Trott of Mt. Vernon. This bill, after providing in the first Section for the establishment of the Survey, appointment of the Director by the Governor and authority to appoint necessary specialists and assistants, states in Sections 2 to 4 the objects of the survey as follows:

"SECTION 2. The Survey shall have for its objects: (1) An examination of the animal and plant life of the state with special reference to its distribution, abundance, increase or decrease, and facts of practical or scientific importance as a foundation for accurate instruction in the schools of the state. In particular shall facts relating to the organic purity of water supplies, the food supply of fishes, the game birds and animals, and forms affecting public health be considered. (2) The identification of birds, fishes, and other animals or plants sent in for the purpose by officers of the Fish and Game Commission, State Board of Health, City Boards of Health, or other State, County or municipal bodies calling for such information, or by the general public so far as they may be of public interest or value, and as the time of the officers may permit. Such investigations as may be especially desired by the State Board of Health in connection with the water supplies or the disease-producing or transmitting forms of life, or the Fish and Game Commission or other State Bureaus for the purpose of their work shall be given preference and pushed with all possible speed consistent with careful work. (3) The preparation of special reports with necessary illustrations and maps which shall embody both a general and a detailed description of the work of the survey.

SEC. 3. The collections made in pursuance of this act shall be deposited at the Ohio State University and shall be available for study by any person properly qualified, under such regulations made by officers of the Survey, as may be necessary for the permanent preservation and use of the collections.

SEC. 4. The Survey may from any duplicate material in its collections furnish sets to such colleges, museums, high schools, or township schools of the state as may be willing to pay the cost

of labelling and transporting such specimens, and furnish evidence that such collections will be duly preserved and made available for the use of students and others interested. Preference is to be given in order of application to high schools offering courses in Nature Study, Zoology or Botany, and so located that no other collections of a similar nature are available for study and demonstration."

The Sections following (5 to 8) provide for publication which is on the same plan as the Geological Survey, for compensation of officers, expenses and accounting, and provides an annual appropriation of \$5000 for carrying on the work.

It is believed by the Committee and others consulted that the bill would give an opportunity to push a much needed study of our native fauna and flora and it should meet the hearty support of all interested in the Natural History of the State as well as the members of the Academy. Letters endorsing the measure to be effective, should be sent as promptly as possible to individual members of the House or Senate or to Hon. C. V. Trott, House of Representatives, Capitol Building, Columbus, Ohio.

While an argument for the Survey seems altogether unnecessary for readers of the *NATURALIST*, a statement of some of the lines of study especially needed may be useful. It is particularly desirable that there should be a careful, systematic study of the Fauna and Flora, pushed as rapidly as possible to determine the present status and for comparison during future years. Such a scientific foundation is needed in many lines of study or practical work but perhaps from the standpoint of general knowledge would serve its greatest purpose as a help to teachers of Natural Science in the various schools. It will have all the greater service in this connection if these same teachers can have a hand in the work of the survey and in the distribution and use of the collections resulting from its work. A full knowledge of the aquatic life of the waters of the state is of direct and essential importance in matters of health and in the development of the fishing interests; moreover, the depletion or extinction of such life by sewage and factory waste that pollute our lakes and streams has economic as well as scientific interest.

The bill already has received approval and hearty endorsement from the presidents of a number of Ohio colleges and universities and of individuals acquainted with the need for such a survey. It is House Bill No. 363.

H. O.